

CONNECTICUT RIVER ATLANTIC SALMON COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting September 25, 1997 Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center Turners Falls, Massachusetts

The Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission (CRASC) met on September 25, 1997, at the Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center in Turners Falls, Massachusetts. The meeting convened at 10:15 a.m. and adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Agenda Item:

1. Call to Order, Determination of Quorum and State Representation, and Approval of Minutes from June 26, 1997 - *McInnes*

Chair Duncan McInnes presided over the meeting. All States were represented. Mr. Duncan McInnes represented Commissioner Wayne Vetter for the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game, Mr. John O'Leary represented Commissioner Wayne MacCallum for the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife, Mr. Angelo Incerpi represented Commissioner Al Elser of Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Public Commissioners from Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut were absent.

Commissioner Charlie Thoits moved to accept the Minutes of the last meeting, Mr. Angelo Incerpi seconded the motion, and the Minutes were accepted with one exception. The next regular CRASC meeting was scheduled for October 16, 1996. This meeting has been rescheduled for November 13, 1997.

2. Approval of Today's Agenda - *McInnes*

Commissioner Jon Rittgers moved to accept the agenda, Mr. Angelo Incerpi seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved.

3. Discussion of the Strategic Plan - *McInnes*

Mr. John O'Leary presented an overview of the draft Strategic Plan for the Commissioners (attached). After discussion, the Commissioners agreed by consensus that the draft Plan was ready for public review with minor changes.

Discussion of the Draft Plan:

The Commissioners discussed the fact that this was a draft Plan until after the public review process and agreed to move forward with that process.

The word "appropriate" was deleted from the presentation of Goal 6 since public expectations cannot be inappropriate though they may be unrealistic.

Minor editorial corrections will be made to the draft Plan before it is released to the public. Commissioners and Technical Committee members were asked to review the Plan and forward such corrections to the Coordinator by October 20.

Measures added to the draft Plan were briefly reviewed and discussed. Specific references to the life of this draft Plan were deleted since this is a dynamic document which should be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary.

A definition of restoration was developed by the Commissioners to be highlighted and added to Section II - Program Summary:

What Does Restoration Mean?

It means different things to different people. The Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission says that restoration is:

- the realization and maintenance of targeted adult returns as specified in the draft Plan,
- having salmon present throughout the basin as defined in the Plan,
- having spawning populations in selected tributaries,
- an ongoing process requiring management with hatchery support, and
- having a sport fishery

Discussion of the Public Process:

The need for a summary document of important issues and points was discussed. The presentation used for the Commissioners was adequate for the public process though the Executive Summary could be added as an explanatory cover to make it easier for the public to understand the gist of the draft Plan. This is where to aesthetics and ancillary benefits of the program can be highlighted: salmon are an indicator species for water quality and integrity of watershed; the program has focused agency efforts cooperatively on a long-term program with benefits throughout the basin, real estate values have increased, boating and other recreation has increased, and the cost of restoration is fully recovered when the entire result is reviewed throughout the basin.

Copies of the draft Plan should be made available for public review at sites throughout the watershed to be determined by the states but to include libraries. These copies should be made available by the states well in advance of scheduled Public Information Meetings.

The draft Plan should also be served on the Internet. The Coordinator will review options for a link to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Home Page and any other available agency web sites among cooperators.

Copies of the draft Plan should also be made available to primary cooperators upon request. The list of cooperators to receive the draft Plan should be developed by the states with blanket organizations covered by the state in which the headquarters for the organization are located (list to be finalized at the next CRASC meeting). States need to determine how many copies are required so that adequate numbers can be printed (number to be finalized at the next CRASC meeting).

Public Information Meetings should be held in all four states, location and time at the states' discretion (to be finalized at the next CRASC meeting). The states will also be responsible for announcements and mailings though a press release and public notice will otherwise be standardized by the Coordinator (draft ready for next CRASC meeting). The Technical Committee will develop a calendar and outline responsibilities for completing the public review process (for the next CRASC meeting).

The meetings may consist of an open-house approach where the public can familiarize themselves with the draft Plan and ask questions, followed by a brief presentation on the draft Plan and a comment period. The presentation in all four states will be made by John O'Leary to ensure consistency of message. The Coordinator will summarize comments for each meeting, for written comments, and for the overall public review process. All agencies will be represented at all state meetings to emphasize the cooperative aspect of the program. The core group for the meetings will consist of John O'Leary, Technical Committee Chair & presenter, Jan Rowan, CRASC Executive Assistant, and the state Commissioners and Technical Committee member.

Attendance at the Public Information Meetings will be recorded, complete with address and phone numbers. Results of the public review process will be provided to people on this list if desired. Results may include a summary of comments received, response to comments, and a copy of the final Plan. This information may also be served on the same Internet site as the draft Plan.

4. Next CRASC Meeting Date - Rowan

The next CRASC meeting date is scheduled for November 13, 1997, at the Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center in Turners Falls, Massachusetts.

ATTENDANCE

Janice N. Rowan	USFWS
John O'Leary	MAFW
Ernie Beckwith	CTDEP
Ron Howey	USFWS
John Warner	USFWS
Steve Gephard	CTDEP
Ben Rizzo	USFWS
Craig Michaud	UMASS
Phil Herzig	USFWS
Bob Stira	NUSCO
Marsha Browning	USFWS
Jon Rittgers	NOAA-NMFS
Angelo Incerpi	VTFW
Jay McMenemy	VTFW
Charles Thoits	NH Public Sector Commissioner
Duncan McInnes	NHFG
Michelle Babione	USFWS
Cori Rose	NOAA-NMFS